



Daily Report

Sub-Saharan Africa

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Tuesday
2 April 1996

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April 1996

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Daily Report

Sub-Saharan Africa

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Burundi

Burundi: Parliament Speaker Says 14 Killed in Hutu Ambush

LD0104200096 Paris Radio France International in French 1730 GMT 1 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The president of the parliament has announced that 14 people were killed yesterday [31 March] in an ambush set by Hutu rebels in the vicinity of Bujumbura. Acts of violence are getting closer to the capital.

In southern Burundi, the toll has increased to about 100 deaths among civilians over two weeks. The prime minister of Burundi today visited the province of Bururi where the rebels carried out their first slaughter on 6 March.

A joint EU-U.S. mission arrived in Burundi today in order to try to give a new boost to humanitarian aid.

Rwanda

Rwanda: Minister Reacts to Expulsion of Zaire-Based Compatriots

AB0104191396 London BBC World Service in English 1505 GMT 1 Apr 96

[From the "Focus on Africa" program]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] There were reports last week of hundreds of people being forced to flee Zaire's north Kivu Province into Rwanda. The reports say that they were attacked by Zairian troops and Hutu militias and told to leave on the basis that although they were Zairian nationals, they were of Rwandan origin. Some were killed, it is reported, their property destroyed, and their land occupied. And refugees made their way into Rwanda through Gisenyi border post in northwest Rwanda. On the line to Kigali, Timothy Ecott asked Charles Muligande, Rwanda's transport minister, how many people had so far crossed over.

[Begin recording] [Muligande] On Thursday [28 March] and Friday, there were about 800 a day. I have no figures for Saturday and Sunday, but I think this is really a big problem. Those people have been living in Zaire for generations, and they found themselves in Zaire because of what was decided at the Berlin conference, so as

far as they are concerned they are Zairians and should not be expelled to Rwanda. If Zaire was to decide to expel them to Rwanda, they should give them to us with also the land that was taken from Rwanda at the Berlin conference.

[Ecott] Who do you think is responsible for forcing them over the border? What are they saying has happened?

[Muligande] They are saying that they have been attacked by Zairian soldiers and also militias and former Rwandese Armed Forces that are in Zaire.

[Ecott] What is the Rwandan Government doing about it? Have you protested to the Zairian authorities?

[Muligande] Yes. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has issued a protest note, and we intend also to seize [as heard] the Security Council to resolve that issue.

[Ecott] But this is a problem that has been going on, as you say, for some years. Is it really practical to assume that Rwanda will be able to do anything about these people's situation?

[Muligande] Oh, we shall welcome them in Rwanda and, at the same time, engage in discussions with Zaire to see if those who are Zairians are given protection that they deserve from any respectable government. It is expected that a government should protect its citizens.

[Ecott] You say that some 800 came over on Friday. There were reports of more people coming over at the weekend. So would you be able to put a rough figure on it? Is it now a couple of thousand?

[Muligande] I think there are more than a couple of thousand, because for sure, as of Friday, there were about 800 and you understand that they kept coming over the weekend. I should expect they are about maybe 4,000 or 5,000.

[Ecott] Do you have any facilities there at the border with Zaire to look after these people?

[Muligande] Yes, we have several transit camps that were put there and are in operation to welcome our own refugees which are living in Zaire. We were not expecting that those transit camps were going to be used for Zairian citizens, but now since they are refugees, we are going to welcome them at those transit camps. [end recording]

South Africa: Mandela Undergoes 'Minor Operation' to Right Knee

*MB0204115796 Johannesburg SAPA in English
1138 GMT 2 Apr 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Bellville April 2 SAPA — President Nelson Mandela had a minor operation on his right knee on Monday, delegates to an international law conference were told on Tuesday. Mandela apologised for his inability to walk properly, saying that "yesterday the doctors were pumping me with all sorts of needles".

According to Justice Minister Dullah Omar, Mandela's knee would be immobilised for a couple of days. "It is only a minor operation but he insisted on coming," he told SAPA [SOUTH AFRICAN PRESS AGENCY].

Asked about his knee, Mandela said he was okay.

South Africa: Ramaphosa To Emerge as 'Powerful Force' at Cabinet Level

*MB0204082496 Johannesburg THE STAR in English
1 Apr 96 p 12*

[Report by Mondli Makhanya]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The latest Cabinet reshuffle has once more highlighted Cyril Ramaphosa's position as one the great enigmas in South African politics. Nobody, even Ramaphosa himself, quite knows just what role he will play in the next few years. All that is certain is that this wily negotiator and deal-maker will emerge as a powerful force at cabinet level.

It is generally accepted within the ANC that the succession battle has been settled and Thabo Mbeki has emerged the victor in the contest with Ramaphosa. Ramaphosa has apparently accepted this and has now set his eyes on a powerful cabinet role until the older Mbeki makes way at some point.

Much of the uncertainty over Ramaphosa's role is the result of his uppishness. After the 1994 elections, Ramaphosa was left out of the Cabinet after he insisted on no less a post than the deputy presidency, which was given to his rival Mbeki. Ramaphosa was then given the relatively powerful position of heading the Constitutional Assembly, a body that had a two-year lifespan.

This then gave rise to speculation about just what exactly Ramaphosa's position would be once the Constitutional Assembly's life ends in May.

The former National Union of Mineworkers secretary-general has received quite attractive offers from the private sector. He has been linked to a black consortium that is bidding for JCI [Johannesburg Consolidated Investment] subsidiary Johnnic, one of South Africa's

financial powerhouses. President Nelson Mandela is aware of this and Ramaphosa has subtly and cleverly played the private sector card in his bargaining for a powerful cabinet post.

He eyed the key finance portfolio, which was given to Trade and Industry Minister Trevor Manuel with Manuel's post now taken by another ambitious ANC minister, Ramaphosa will have to settle for something less glossy.

Besides Ramaphosa's own campaign for a powerful position, the ANC also wants him to play a key role in government. When his current position in the Constitutional Assembly expires, Ramaphosa cannot simply sit on the parliamentary benches and vegetate like so many able ANC members have done over the past two years. The issue of what post he will get has been complicated by Ramaphosa's bargaining.

This might now necessitate another cabinet reshuffle, which will probably occur either in April or May, when Mandela will probably announce a recomposition of the Cabinet which will bring Ramaphosa into the picture. He is likely to be given a senior post.

One of the proposals currently doing the rounds in the ANC component of the Cabinet is that several portfolios be reorganised to make way for him. Whatever becomes of Ramaphosa in the next few months, it is certain that a resolution of his future role will set at ease the minds of those concerned about the direction of the country.

South Africa: Cabinet Approves New Identification Card System

*MB0204082296 Johannesburg THE STAR in English
1 Apr 96 p 3*

[Report by Priscilla Singh]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Department of Home Affairs is ready to undertake a mammoth project, expected to cost between R300-million [rands] and R500-million, to reissue identity cards.

The new system will incorporate a fingerprint database of more than 30 million people and establish an ID card production facility. The Cabinet approved a R407-million scheme last week to replace the identity books with cards featuring fingerprints.

Home Affairs spokesman Mark Mkwana said the system of fingerprinting people for identity documents "merely continues an existent practice", in terms of the population register. "The department is responsible for the compilation and maintenance of a population register and is not involved in a process of conscription or any other scheme of population control," he said.

He said people could not refuse to be fingerprinted, and legislation provided for this. The new system was in the planning stages, he said. "Existing documents will remain valid and people will not be forced to get new identity cards or be fingerprinted," he added.

Another department spokesman, Hennie Meyer, said the old identity books would be phased out and the scheme introduced over the next eight years.

The classification code allocated to each full set of fingerprints would be carried on a computer database and would form part of the unique record of each individual for identification purposes.

On the issue of passports, Mkwana said these documents were issued separately and had nothing in common with the issuing of identity documents. "However, fingerprints already on record are utilised to identify an applicant beyond doubt for a passport before it is issued or renewed."

Lawyers for Human Rights director Jody Kollapen said one could argue that taking fingerprints amounted to an invasion of one's privacy. "The question arises whether it is a reasonable, justifiable limitation of one's right to privacy. That question could be answered in the affirmative if, and for example, the motive for requiring fingerprints is to avoid fraud in the issuing of documents or duplication.

"If, on the other hand, the motive of the department is to track down the whereabouts of the population, then perhaps it would not be reasonable or justifiable to have such a system implemented," said Kollapen.

Home Affairs Minister Mangosuthu Buthelezi has said he would like to introduce a new system in the form of a new identity card, a new passport and an automated fingerprinting identification system. The new system would also be instrumental in combating the influx of illegal immigrants.

"It will also be used for pensions, making it much easier to keep proper records and thus avoiding the massive losses being incurred there," added Meyer.

South African Press Review for 1 Apr

MB0104150496

[FBIS Report]

THE STAR

ANC Takes Charge of Country's Purse Strings — The appointment of Trevor Manuel as South Africa's first

ANC finance minister "is another milestone" according to a page-12 editorial in Johannesburg **THE STAR** in English on 1 April. "It allows the ruling party to demonstrate that economic stability and investor confidence are not dependent on white outsiders in this critical portfolio." For the first time the ANC has "taken charge of the country's purse strings and it is up to Manuel to prove that his party has the ability to manage the country's fiscus." Manuel has "acquitted himself well in his former position and his promotion sends a message to the world that the ANC believes there is nothing to be feared in a black finance minister. Mandela has taken a bold step in this further break with the past. Now Manuel deserves to be given every chance by the country's business and financial communities."

BUSINESS DAY

Criticism of Cabinet Appointment Quotas — "There are so many reasons people are selected for Cabinet posts or deputy ministerships these days that the most important requirement — merit — is in danger of being forgotten," points out Johannesburg **BUSINESS DAY** in English on 30 March in a page-6 editorial. The constitution specifies how many ministers and deputies each party may have. "So a vacancy is filled first by a party, and there are yet more requirements before quality comes into play. The NP [National Party] may or may not still consider provincial representation, but it is certainly striving for racial diversity. The ANC has a number of constituencies to satisfy, including its election allies in COSATU [Congress of South African Trade Unions] and the SACP [South African Communist Party]." **BUSINESS DAY** [words indistinct] composition will reflect a degree of political compromise, but trade-offs of one kind or another are in danger of being seen as a dominant selection factor."

THE CITIZEN

New Finance, Deputy Ministers — Johannesburg **THE CITIZEN** in English on 29 March in a page-6 editorial comments on the appointment of Trevor Manuel as the new finance minister, saying that "if he accepts his obligation not only to keep South Africa's house in order, but impress overseas businessmen and investors with sound policies, then he would serve the country well in his new post." New Deputy Finance Minister Gill Marcus has been "one of the few surprises of the new Parliament, with a reputation for dedication, efficiency and diligence as chairperson of Parliament's Joint Standing Committee on Finance. She has won respect for handling complex economic issues."

Botswana**Botswana: Minister Kedikilwe Tightens Grip on Government Media**

*MB3003142996 Gaborone MMEGI in English
16-22 Mar 96 p 4*

[Report by Keto Segwai]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Uncertainty has descended upon the Department of Information and Broadcasting caused by none other than the all-powerful Minister of Presidential Affairs and Public Administration, Ponatshego Kedikilwe.

PHK, as he is popularly known and who is also responsible for the government media, has put the department under a tight grip. The grip unparalleled at any given time since the department's inception, except probably during the Daniel Kwelagobe era, insiders say.

The Director of the Department, Ted Makgekggenene, is reportedly spending much of his time commuting between his office and that of Kedikilwe. Apparently to be rapped over the knuckles on any coverage that displeases the minister.

In turn, the director allegedly calls constant meetings of heads of units to caution them. The development, MMEGI is reliably informed has thrown the news media operations into a quandary.

In their haste to please their publicity insatiable minister, the hard-pressed heads have instead, albeit unintentionally, committed more errors. The levels of stress are said to have reached an all time high at the department.

As one head, who preferred anonymity for obvious reasons, told Mmegi: "The problem with PHK is that he thinks everybody in the department is against him and his party. This has led to a situation whereby the minister literally writes and edits his stories, and in the process, breaking all journalistic presentation rules."

PHK's undeclared mission is to put the department on "the correct political footing", say the source. The transfer of former Chief Press Officer, Bapusi Mphusu, to the Ministry of Commerce and Industry as assistant registrar of companies, could be a pointer in that direction. Recently, at one of those infamous heads of unit meetings, PHK, while commenting on the labeling of the department as "Radio PHK"; allegedly retorted that the opposition are complaining because they are not having it easy as they used to.

Mozambique**Mozambique: Parliament Divided Over Composition of Defense Council**

MB0104150696 Maputo Radio Mozambique Network in Portuguese 1400 GMT 1 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Members of Parliament have completed the first reading of the Draft Law on the National Defense and Security Council, and there is prevailing disagreement over its composition. The Mozambique National Resistance bench says civil society should be represented in the Council to permit greater transparency in its functioning. The Mozambique Liberation Front bench stands by the Ministers Council proposal whereby the National Defense and Security Council should consist of the prime minister, seven cabinet ministers, the director general of the State Information and Security Service, the chief of staff of the Mozambique Defense Armed Forces, and the Police commander. The bill will go through its second reading on 2 April.

Swaziland**Swaziland: Report Recommends Selling National Airline Jet**

*MB0104190096 Johannesburg SAPA in English
1538 GMT 01 Apr 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MBABANE April 1 SAPA — Swaziland's government was considering selling its Pigg's Peak hotel and the national airline's Fokker 100 jet after both had been running at a loss for years, the country's Parliament heard on Friday.

A consultancy report compiled by an overseas firm recommended the southern African country sell its only Fokker 100 and use the old Fokker 28 until the airline was sold off, Commerce and Industry Minister Majah'enkhaba Dlamini said.

The larger aeroplane was bought for R130 [rands] million two years [words indistinct] despite public protest and a record government deficit of some R300 million. At the time there were allegations of massive commissions received by some highly-placed Swazis said to have pressured the government into approving the purchase. The government denied the allegations.

Royal Swazi Airlines had reportedly lost millions since its inception 18 years ago. The airline began with a single Fokker [word indistinct] jet.

The government had been pumping millions into the airline and hotel ventures in the hope they would eventually pay their way. Dlamini said on Friday a study

of the hotel's operations would be conducted before a final decision on its future was taken.

Zambia

Zambia: New Organization Reportedly Threatens To Kill Ministers

MB0204082796 (Internet) Zambia Today in English
2 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Some Cabinet ministers in President Frederick Chiluba's government have received death threats and insulting notes from an organisation calling itself "Black Mamba Organisation" because of their strong support for the Constitution Amendment Bill.

Following the issue of these threats the Movement for Multi-Party Democracy has unearthed information linking two opposition parties to the "Black Mamba Organisation." MMD [Movement for Multiparty Democracy] National Secretary, Michael Sata, named the two opposition parties involved and warned that action will be taken against them.

Mr Sata, who made a copy of the written threats available to the media said the group is also responsible for threatening the wife of Swedish Ambassador to Zambia, Mr Andes Johnson, Annie-Marie.

Mr Sata claimed Sunday that the dirty campaign tactics of the opposition is part of their plan to destabilise the country and give an impression to the donor community and investors that Zambia is not a safe country to come to. In view of the serious threats coming from the opposition parties, Mr Sata said, it was important for Cabinet Ministers to be security conscious at all times as they can easily fall victim of the "Black Mambas."

He said as the country drifts towards end year elections the party expected those unsure of victory to launch sinister activities which could disrupt what the nation stands for and ensure them a back-door entry into government.

Zambia: Senior NP Official Defects, Rejoins UNIP

MB0204082196 Lusaka THE POST in English
2 Apr 96

[Report by Mervin Syafunko; received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] National Party Deputy Secretary General Mulondwe Muzungu has resigned from the party to join UNIP [United National Independence Party].

Announcing his resignation at Freedom House yesterday, Muzungu said he had decided to rejoin UNIP because it was the only viable opposition party Zambians could rely on. "UNIP has proven the capacity to rule Zambia again and I am calling upon other opposition parties to join hands with it in order to remove MMD [Movement for Multiparty Democracy] which has brought misery to retrenchees and farmers," said Muzungu.

National Party Vice-President Daniel Lisulo in an interview yesterday said Muzungu's resignation was regrettable and he wished he had met him before he made that decision. "It is a pity I did not have the chance to talk to him, anyway I am happy he did not join the MMD because as an opposition we aim at removing it," Lisulo said.

UNIP Vice-President Chief Inyambo Yeta said Muzungu had cause to join UNIP because it was where he belonged.

Benin**Benin: Court Declares Kerekou President**

AB0104223096 Cotonou Office de Radiodiffusion-Télévision du Benin Radio in French 1930 GMT 1 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] After examining the various appeals lodged by the two presidential candidates, Nicéphore Dieudonné Soglo and Mathieu Kerekou, concerning the results of the 18 March election, the Constitutional Court has confirmed Mr. Kerekou president of the Republic of Benin. The final results of the second round of the presidential election were proclaimed at the headquarters of the court in Cotonou this afternoon. Let us listen to Elizabeth Pognon, chairperson of the Constitutional Court:

[Begin Pognon recording] [passage omitted] In view of all the documents examined by the court, the appeals lodged by candidates Soglo and Kerekou against the electoral results must be rejected. Consequently, the Constitutional Court rejects the appeals lodged by candidates Soglo and Kerekou. It declares Mr. Kerekou definitively elected president of the Republic.

In accordance with Article 47, paragraph 2, of the Constitution, the term of office of Mathieu Kerekou will become effective from 4 April at midnight. Mr Kerekou is obliged — in accordance with Article 52, paragraph 2, of the Constitution — at the beginning and at the end of his term of office to solemnly declare in writing all his assets and property. This declaration will be addressed to the Office of Audit of the Supreme Court.

The present proclamation will be published in the official gazette. The following members of the Constitutional Court were at the session held in Cotonou on 30 March through 1 April to examine the appeals: Elizabeth Pognon, chairperson; Alexis Hountondji, deputy chairman; Bruno Ahionsou, member; Pierre Ehouni, member; Alfred Elegbe, member; Hubert Maga, member; Maurice Ahanzo Glele, member. [end recording]

Benin: Soglo Concedes Defeat in Presidential Elections

AB0204131396 Paris AFP in English 1233 GMT 02 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Cotonou, April 2 (AFP) — Outgoing President Nicéphore Soglo on Tuesday conceded defeat at the polls, acknowledging a ruling by the Constitutional Court following presidential elections on March 18.

Soglo congratulated his successor, former military ruler General Mathieu Kerekou, in a letter, a copy of which was received by AFP.

He sent his "very warm and cordial congratulations" to Kerekou, who headed a Marxist regime between 1972 and 1991, when Soglo defeated him in the last presidential elections in March of that year.

Benin: Reaction to Kerekou Win Viewed

AB0104175696 London BBC World Service in English 1705 GMT 1 Apr 96

[From the "Focus on Africa" program]

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Benin's Constitutional Court, which has the last word on the matter, has finally ruled on the outcome of last month's presidential election. The Electoral Commission made the former military dictator, Mathieu Kerekou, the winner with over 50 percent of the votes cast, which meant defeat for the incumbent, Nicéphore Soglo. However, both men appealed to the Constitutional Court, alleging irregularities in the count, and the court has now given its ruling, as Josephine Hazely heard from Karim Okanla in Benin:

[Begin recording] [Okanla] The judgment was that Kerekou has been confirmed as the winner of the presidential election that took place here exactly two weeks ago. The court basically said that neither Soglo nor Kerekou have been able to substantiate the evidence of irregularities. Therefore, the court had decided to confirm the results and not change a single thing. [passage omitted]

[Hazely] But are people really looking forward to a reign by Mathieu Kerekou?

[Okanla] Well, since the man talked of a government of national unity, most people are really keen on knowing exactly what he means. They are definitely expecting him to include in his government people from various parts of the country and not just people from one tribal or one ethnic group.

[Hazely] No, I mean is Mathieu Kerekou really seen as somebody who, as they say, changed his thought. I mean, we all remember how despotic he was when he was a military ruler of Benin.

[Okanla] Well, people are saying here that he did all he did under a Marxist administration, that it was a one party, a single party system back in the 70's and 80's, but now things have drastically changed. I mean they have different state institutions like the Constitutional Court, the National Assembly, the High Authority of the Audiovisual, and many other nongovernmental organizations and other pressure groups that will probably press for more freedom. I don't think the country is going to go back to the dark days of dictatorship. Besides, the entourage of Mathieu Kerekou is going to be

made up of civilians and well-educated people, people of international repute, and I don't think France, which reportedly has played an important role in the return of Kerekou to power, is going to allow Kerekou to rule in a dictatorial way. [end recording]

Nigeria:

Nigeria: UN Team Meets Supreme Court Head Over Ogoni Issue

*ABO104191996 London BBC World Service
in English 1705 GMT 1 Apr 96*

[From the African news]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The United Nations team sent to Nigeria to investigate the execution of the author and publisher Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other Ogoni activists has met the Supreme Court's president. The team is due to hold a series of meetings with other legal officials and lawyers and will also be traveling to the southern Rivers State, where Mr. Saro-Wiwa and his colleagues were executed. The BBC correspondent in Lagos said the team had earlier expressed concern about the Nigerian Government's attempts to narrow the scope of its inquiries. A full report on the team's findings is due to be submitted to the UN Secretary General Butrus-Butrus-Ghali.

Nigeria: Officials Thank UN Secretary General for 'Fairness'

*ABO104224596 Lagos NTA Television Network
in English 2000 GMT 1 Apr 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The minister of the Federal Capital Territory, Lieutenant General Jerry Useni, has commended the United Nations secretary general, Dr. Butrus Butrus-Ghali, for his fairness in dealing with the Nigerian situation. He made the remark when a four-man UN fact-finding mission called on him in Abuja. Correspondent Blossom Ugbane has the report:

[Begin recording] Ugbane] General Useni said the Nigerian Government has always stated its preparedness to cooperate with visiting international bodies who would seek to know the truthful vision of the issue at stake. He explained the genesis of the Ken Saro Wiwa issue and wondered why some international organizations would rather listen to dissidents than the Nigerian Government.

[Useni] And what has surprised us most is that nobody, at least those countries that are talking about Saro Wiwa, none of them is interested to know what happened to the other four because after (?all) we should be talking about the Ogoni 13.

[Ugbane] Earlier the leader of the delegation, former Togolese foreign minister Mr. Atsu Koffi Amega, said the mission was initiated by the United Nations secretary general, Butrus Butrus-Ghali, to examine the trial of Ken Saro Wiwa and collect information on the government democratization programs. [end recording]

At a briefing session with the four-member mission, the minister of justice, Chief Michael Agbamuche, said their arrival at the instance of the Federal Government was a testimony to the fact Nigeria has nothing to hide from the international community of which it is a proud member. He expressed confidence that their presence will provide the UN ample opportunity to verify Nigeria's position and actions with specific reference to the mission's areas of inquiry which have to do with the Ogoni riots, the trial of Ken Saro Wiwa and eight others, as well as the political transition program leading up to a civil democracy in Nigeria.

Chief Agbamuche, however, regretted that this opportunity of fair hearing was not granted Nigeria before her suspension from the Commonwealth and that the UN team will, in the course of their investigations, appreciate that the General Assembly's resolution against Nigeria was premature. In its official program, the United Nations special mission will spend about two weeks during which it will visit Lagos, Rivers, Oshun, Borno, Kano, and Enugu states.

Nigeria: Opposition Meets in Norway, To Form Umbrella Organization

*ABO104192796 London BBC World Service
in English 1705 GMT 1 Apr 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Nigerian pro-democracy groups are reported to have agreed to form an umbrella organization to oppose Nigeria's military government. A statement issued in the Norwegian capital, Oslo, said the group will be called the United Democratic Front of Nigeria, UDFN. Its aim will be a peaceful return to civilian rule in Nigeria. The announcement came after two days of talks in Oslo. Some 20 opposition figures took part, including Nigeria's Nobel prize-winning author, Wole Soyinka. He said the military regime's opponents had to speak with one voice, especially in political matters.

Nigeria: Pro-Democracy Group Member Views Formation of New Body

*ABO204104496 London BBC World Service
in English 0630 GMT 2 Apr 96*

[From the "Network Africa" program]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Nigerian pro-democracy groups are claiming a major breakthrough in their fight

against military rule in their country. Following secret talks in Oslo and Johannesburg at the weekend, 13 groups have merged as the United Democratic Front of Nigeria, UDFN, and voted to peacefully strive to restore civilian rule in Nigeria. Up until now the main umbrella group was NADECO [National Democratic Coalition]. David Steed asked one of the conference organizers, Dr. Kayode Sayami, whether NADECO had effectively been replaced.

[Begin recording] [Sayami] NADECO has up until now done a brilliant job of leading the coalition against the Nigerian military, but we are also at a stage where people, both at home and outside, feel that the campaign needs rejuvenation, the campaign needs a little bit more clarity in our objectives, and the campaign also needs a wider coverage.

[Steed] Is it a recognition then that the tactics and strategies that you have used so far have failed?

[Sayami] It is a recognition that we always have to reconsider the strategies in light of events. It may not be that it has failed, it may be that we need to do more work.

[Steed] The fact is General Abacha is still head of state and then in that sense you must have failed.

[Sayami] No, we haven't failed. What it clearly indicates is that we have more work to do [laughing]. Not that we have failed, and we are under no illusion that this is going to end tomorrow. It is a long struggle and this in itself is an attempt by all of us to show that we have got a long haul on our hands and we are prepared to go as long as it takes.

[Steed] What practically can you do when you say you have more work to do? What practically can you do?

[Sayami] Well, we have to show very clearly to the people. I mean there are those who have found themselves in situations of actually participating in the elections. They have discovered rather lately that the elections at the local government level was a farce and that the whole transition process itself is bogus. We have more work on our hands to convince the people on the grounds that this is so.

[Steed] Hasn't it always been the crux of your problems though that while you have many exiled members or members outside Nigeria, there has so far been no indication of a huge support for opposition groups within Nigeria?

[Sayami] Silence within Nigeria should never be interpreted or misconstrued as acquiescence. There is a lot of grass-root support, but there is also a fact that we've got to deal with serious and persistent intimidation by

the military. So people have to choose between tactical resistance and [word indistinct] boldness. [end recording]

Nigeria: Israeli Government Imposes Age Restriction on Pilgrims

AB3103185896 Kaduna Radio Nigeria in English 1700 GMT 31 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Israeli ambassador to Nigeria, Mr. (Gormann), says Nigerians below the age of 45 years will no longer be allowed to undertake pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Speaking with newsmen in Oka, Anambra State, Mr. (Gormann) said the Israeli Government had resolved to impose this age restriction considering the high rate of abscondment of pilgrims from Nigeria. He noted that Nigeria had the highest number of pilgrimages to Israel annually and that an increase in the amount paid by the pilgrims would help check the rate of abscondment.

The ambassador disclosed that Israel would soon send a group of consultants to Anambra State to study its erosion problem.

Sierra Leone

Sierra Leone: New Civilian President Sworn In

AB2903173196 London BBC World Service in English 1505 GMT 29 Mar 96

[From the "Focus on Africa" program]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The military regime of General Maada Bio in Sierra Leone has duly handed over power to an elected civilian president, Alhaji Tejan Kabbah. The military has ruled Sierra Leone for the past four years. The soldiers claimed they would quickly be able to crush Foday Sankoh's RUF [Revolutionary United Front] rebellion, which has now been going on for five years. There is a fragile cease-fire at the moment, but the question remains: Will Foday Sankoh be able to deal with Tejan Kabbah? Anyway, the swearing-in happened this morning in Freetown. Our correspondent, Victor Sylver, was there. Khadria Ahmed asked him what the atmosphere was like.

[Begin recording] [Sylver] The atmosphere was one of genial jubilation and expectation. For the first time in so many years, people in Sierra Leone [words indistinct] because there are people from all over the country converging in Freetown wanting to witness the ceremony.

[Ahmed] And was there a huge crowd at this ceremony?

[Sylver] You should have seen the crowd! The crowd stretched for over a mile. People were just wanting

to see anything that would give them a feeling that after all, they were there and they witnessed the whole ceremony. You had dancing groups stretching all over the periphery of Parliament Building. You had dancing groups from all parts of the country, political party supporters — all coming here in order to witness this occasion that has been described as very historic.

[Ahmed] Now, what about the mood in the actual chamber where the swearing-in took place? What was it like in there?

[Sylver] The mood, I would say, was one of real seriousness, seriousness for the fact you know, as I said, many people have never witnessed such a ceremony and even then, you can seriously doubt in the minds of....[pauses] A small segment of the community were not quite believing that....[pauses] Can a military man really hand over to a civilian government, and that was what happened in the Chamber of Parliament. You had Maada Bio holding the staff of office and handing it over to Tejan Kabbah and actually acknowledging him as his new head of state and as his new president and giving him a salute after handing over the staff of office to him.

[Ahmed] And Alhaji Ahmed Tejan Kabbah, the new president, how did he look?

[Sylver] Oh, he looked very dignified, what you will expect from somebody who expects that in the next couple of minutes, he should be the head of state of the Republic of Sierra Leone. He was in white flowing gown and a white close-fitting cap to match and also he had on white shoes, the kind of shoes you normally see people belonging to the Muslim faith wearing in many parts of West Africa.

[Ahmed] And did he have anything to say?

[Sylver] Oh, he had quite a lot. He knew that he had so many problems to tackle and [words indistinct] he identified certain problems like poverty, injustice, ignorance, and then what he called certain [words indistinct] that have been eating into the very fabric of Sierra Leone, and then of course, there were the peace talks that had been initiated by Maada Bio and the outgoing government, and he said that he was looking up to meeting Foday Sankoh and having discussions with him as soon as possible.

[Ahmed] Now, of course this is the end, you know, of a military regime in Sierra Leone. Civilians have taken over. Did you get the feeling that the soldiers were quite happy to be going back to the barracks and leaving the business of governing to the civilians?

[Sylver] If they were sad at leaving government, no today, they never showed it, and the general feeling I got was that a majority....[pauses] Quite a large number of them were pretty fed up with the whole business of governance. I think they had grown pretty fed up with being blamed for all the ills of Sierra Leone. Remember, they also came in saying that, well, we are going to do this and we are going to do that, and suddenly they have people saying: Oh what have you been doing? This is what you should have been doing and whatnot. So, I think that whatever, they are going to feel happy over the long run that they have now given the act of governance to those of whose [words indistinct] and that they will go over to the barracks and make sure that the security of the State of Sierra Leone is well preserved. [end recording]

Sierra Leone: New President Orders Release of Rebel Suspects, Ministers

AB0204132196 Paris AFP in English
1143 GMT 02 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Freetown, April 2 (AFP) — Sierra Leone's President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah has ordered the release of dozens of suspected rebels, a former second vice president and two ministers, all detained by the military junta he replaced, national radio announced Tuesday.

The order to release 66 suspected rebels of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), held in a Freetown maximum security prison for more than a year, is seen as an example of Kabbah's efforts to end a civil war that has ravaged Sierra Leone for over five years, killing at least 10,000 people.

Kabbah's inauguration last Friday marked the end of four years of military rule in this impoverished west African country.

Although rebel leader Foday Sankoh, wary of all politicians, does not recognise Kabbah or the new civilian regime, he has said he is willing to continue peace negotiations with the new president.

Diplomats say talks between Kabbah and Sankoh could take place on April 15 in Ivory Coast.

They would follow an unprecedented peace summit attended by Sankoh and former head of state, Brigadier General Julius Maada Bio, held last week in the Ivorian capital Yamoussoukro.

Kabbah has also ordered the release from house arrest of former second vice president Joseph Dauda, former junior transport minister Bu Buake Jabbie, and former development minister Leonard Fofana, all detained

under anti-corruption measures shortly after a group of young army officers led by Captain Valentine Strasser took power in an April 1992 coup.

The detainees "were not released as a prejudice to the (former military) government nor a move against it," according to the broadcast.

Meanwhile, General Joseph Momoh, the president ousted by the 1992 coup, on Monday sent a message of congratulations to Kabbah, from his current home in Guinea.

Reliable sources said the government would welcome Momoh's return to Sierra Leone, which would be in line with reconciliation efforts being pursued by Kabbah.

Sierra Leone: Rebel Activity Reported in North; Civilians Said Targeted

ABO104191596 London BBC World Service in English 1705 GMT 1 Apr 96

[From the "Focus on Africa" program]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] There is meant to be a cease-fire in Sierra Leone at the moment. RUF [Revolutionary United Front] rebels said last week before the inauguration of the new civilian president, Ahmed Tejan Kabbah, that they were prepared to stop fighting for two months. But while the cease-fire seems to be holding in most parts of the country, there are pockets of rebel activity, particularly in and around the town of Yele and Tonko-

lili District, in the north of the country, and there the rebels are targeting civilians. From Makeni, Sylvester Rogers telexed this report:

Reports reaching Makeni from Yele say the followers of the RUF have resorted to massive looting and merciless flogging of innocent civilians rather than shooting them to death. Some of those beaten were left with swollen buttocks. My sources told me that the rebels have said they do indeed recognize the two-month truce, but that as far as they are concerned the cease-fire does not mean an end to the beatings of civilians, who they believe have defied their orders. The reports also said that one government soldier was disarmed and then released by the rebels at the Mile 91 Axis.

Last Friday [29 March], while everyone was busy celebrating the installation of a civilian administration, rebels had other plans. They were engaged in the looting of a government-owned bus and a commercial vehicle between Masingbi and Makali. Two passengers I spoke to said their attackers, who identified themselves as RUF rebels, stripped them of all monies, jewelry, and other valuables. One trader told me he lost \$500, another said the rebels took \$300 off him. A polio victim, who was also traveling in the vehicle, said: I was robbed of 25,000 leones and given a drink of evaporated milk.

People here in Makeni seem to welcome these new tactics, saying it is better than being killed.

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